

AIYANA OPUS

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Creative dancer and instructor with years of performance experience in belly dance, American cabaret style, tribal fusion, and burlesque fusion. Master of Applied Communication and Master of Liberal Studies in American culture with interest in sociology and cultural diversity. Diligent and successful in coaching people of all ages and talent levels.



GROUP DESIGNATIONS/HONORS

Mid-Michigan Belly Dance Competition

2019: Competition sponsor and judge.
2017: 2nd Place Amateur Solo, 2nd Place Professional Solo (The Assistant Director), 4th Place Ensemble/Group.
2016: 1st Place Ensemble/Group, 1st Place Amateur Solo, 1st Place Professional Solo, and 3rd Place Amateur Solo.
2015: 2nd Place Group/Ensemble, 2nd Place Student Solo, 3rd Place Student Solo.
2014: 1st Place Ensemble/Group, 1st Place Student Solo, 2nd Place Professional Solo.

I Love Dance Competition

2019- 1st Place in Teacher Feature category
“Judges Choice” and 1st place in 40+ age category

QUALIFICATIONS/SKILLS

- Experience directing stage presentations
- Direct rehearsals and instruct dancers in techniques to achieve desired effects
- Coordinate production music
- ***Knowledge of theory and techniques in visual arts and fitness***
- Organizational management
- Experience with diverse populations; ethnic minorities, disabilities, criminal backgrounds
- Critical writing and reading skills
- Participate in conventions and workshops
- ***Using logic to identify strengths and weakness, offering alternative solutions***

FITNESS CERTIFICATIONS

2020 The Yoga Teacher’s College, *Gravity Yoga*

2003 National Endurance & Sports Trainers Association, *Spencer Pilates Mat and Ball Calisthenics*

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Brenda's Belly Dancing (2017-Present) **Online Instructor** Global
Create lesson plans, form PowerPoint slides, record and edit video, and produce online courses in the art of Belly Dance, Mat Pilates, and Gravity Yoga. Upload monthly online class content.

Courses: Understanding Context and Preparedness for Belly Dance Class, 6-week choreography

YRA Dream Company (2019-2020) **Company Dancer** Global
Learn belly dance choreography as taught and directed by the highly regarded choreographer Yasmina Ramzy. Perform internationally with company members.

Brenda's Belly Dancing (09/02-Present) **Director, Fitness & Dance Instructor** Michigan
Prepare choreography and teach dance and fitness classes suitable for the level of the participants (have contracted with the fitness center at University of Michigan-Flint, Ashleigh's Dance Shack, Kathy's School of Dance, Genesee County Parks); direct rehearsals and instruct dancers in correct technique to prevent injury; coordinate production music and costuming for performances; determine how to translate ideas and moods into dance movements; formulate curricula and handouts; keeping up with current trends by reading literature, attending and performing publicly; all basic accounting and marketing for small business, arrangement of studio rental agreements.

Workshops: candlelight belly dance, basic poi & fire safety, wine & burlesque, gothic tribal fusion, improvisation, Intro to Belly Dance, Intro to Burlesque.

Event Performances: belly dance convention, retirements, wedding receptions, birthdays, hometown days, county fairs, renaissance fairs, psychic fairs, service groups, business grand opening, and business anniversaries.

Rising Phoenix Health & Arts (2007-2009) **Stage Performer & Organizer** Michigan
Full theater production dance and music shows for fundraising and awareness of philanthropic causes such as domestic violence and autism.

DANCE EDUCATION

Flint School of Performing Arts
2019, Modern I

Course in Dance

Great Lakes Bellydance Convention
2005-2014

3 Days of Class/2 Shows Each Year

University of Michigan- Flint
2004-2006, Modern I, Ballet I and II, Jazz I

Courses in Dance

Perfect Dance Studio
8+Years Total, Belly Dance, Jazz, Lyrical, Tap

Dance Classes

Professional Workshops

2004-Present

Attending many workshops has allowed me to keep up with industry standards, as well as learning basics of playing dumbek (hand drum), and experience performing with zills (finger cymbals), swords, veils, and spinning fire poi.

Instructors studied under: Bozenka and Amar Gamal of the Bellydance Superstars, Sonya Blacker from Chicago, Azziza Salem from Detroit/New York, Oreet from New York, Ruby Jazayre from Illinois, Sharifa from Michigan, Yasmina Amal from Michigan, and Amara from Illinois, Amirah, Galatea, Nilaja Theesfield, Zahira, Susan Warner, Zahra, Magda Szymczyk, Jeanette, Ishra, Julianna, Tamra Henna, Laylia Dancer, Brian Shank, Mike Guymon, Diana the Dancer, Erzsebet, Celeste, Moria Chappell, Jussenya, Najida, Asima Sarantis, Carezza Bint Asya, Aida Al Adawi, Hiba Alkinani, Zhenna Smithson, Sabrina Merrill, Klouise, Mirah Ammal, Ziva, Donna Diva, Kimahri, Amaya, Shahna, John Compton, Beata and Horacio Cifuentes, Yasmina Ramzy.

FORMAL EDUCATION

- 2017 M.A., **Applied Communication**, University of Michigan-Flint, Flint, Michigan
Specialization: Non-Profit Volunteer Management Consulting
Capstone Project: The Children's Center of Wayne County
- 2010 M.A., Liberal Studies, University of Michigan-Flint, Flint, Michigan
Specialization: American Culture
Thesis: **American Belly Dance and Its Cultural Antecedents: The Affects of Sociological and Historical Influence on the Diversity of American Belly Dance**
- 2006 B.A., Social Sciences (With Honors), University of Michigan-Flint, Flint, Michigan
Specialization: Sociology, Psychology, History
Involvement: Voices for Women on Campus, Student Dance Organization, Golden Key International Honor Society (**Public Relations Officer**, 1 year)
- 2001 A.A. and A.S., Arts and Science General Education (With High Honors), Charles Stewart Mott Community College, Flint, Michigan

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 2021 Suhara Jewels presents Heroes and Villains, Performing Artist. Auto City Eagles Club, Mt. Morris, MI
- 2021 Gypsy Goddess Festival, Performing Artist, Allegan County Fairgrounds, MI
- 2020 Livestream Candlelight Guided Dance, Facebook, Global
- 2019 Collette's Vintage and Antiques Benefit for Flint City Pitts, Performing Artist, Burton, MI
- 2019 Michigan Renaissance Festival's Middle Eastern Dance Competition sponsor and judge.
- 2018 Collette's Vintage and Antiques Benefit for Divine Canine, Performing Artist, Burton, MI
- 2018 Owosso Artwalk, Displaying Artist, Owosso, MI
- 2018 Flint DropFest, Vendor Booth, Flint, MI
- 2018 Swartz Creek Hometown Days, Performance and Demonstration, Swartz Creek, MI
- 2017 Arizona Night Market, Performances and Cultural Booth, Peoria, Arizona
- 2017 Flint Drop Fest Performance, Buckham Alley, Flint, Michigan
- 2016 Benefit Show for Housing, The Token Lounge, Westland, Michigan
- 2016 Benefit Show for Medical Expenses, The Maidstone Theater, Ypsilanti, Michigan
- 2016 Benefit Show for Funeral Costs, The Roadhouse Bar, Flint, Michigan
- 2016 Annual Belly Dance Talent Competition Judge, Dance for Freedom, Raising awareness and providing education on how to combat human trafficking, Dearborn Manor, Dearborn, Michigan
- 2016 Art Show Reception, Flint Institute of Arts, Flint, Michigan
- 2016 Sabba Zimora's Annual Hafla, Steve Reynold's Studio 110, Clio, Michigan
- 2015 Light Up the Darkness Benefit Show, On The Dunes Sports Bar, Walled Lake, Michigan
- 2015 Sabba Zimora's Annual Hafla, Steve Reynold's Studio 110, Clio, Michigan
- 2015 Sabba Zimora Performance, Churchill's, Flint, Michigan
- 2014 Belly Dance Christmas Show, John Glenn High School, Bay City, Michigan
- 2014 Belly Dance Diva's 11th Annual Show 'Flirt', John Glenn High School, Bay City, Michigan
- 2014 Metal for a Merry Christmas Food and Toy Drive, The Loft, Lansing, Michigan
- 2013 Sabba Zimora's Annual Hafla, Holy Rosary Hall, Flint, Michigan

SAMPLES OF WORK

<https://sites.google.com/site/brendamaybennett/experience/performing-arts>